

# WATER MANAGEMENT POLICY

## Water Metering and Telemetry

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## PURPOSE OF POLICY

This policy describes the requirements for water meters to be fitted to all irrigation water takes above 5 l/s on the Opuha scheme.

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that water use within the scheme can be accurately accounted for through water metering that is consistent with the NZ Regulations on Measurement and Reporting of Water Takes.

The policy provides for Opuha Water Ltd (OWL) to have timely access to water meter data for operational and water accounting purposes.

The policy also describes the financial assistance being offered by the company to assist individual shareholders with the installation or upgrading of water metering and telemetry.

## APPLICATION

This policy applies to all OWL shareholders and irrigators.

All water takes with a capacity at or above 5 l/s within the Opuha scheme are required to have compliant water meters and associated telemetry systems within the timeframe indicated in this policy.

It is the intention of the Board that, in due course, takes less than 5 l/s will also be required to have meters so that all takes of OWL water are metered.

This policy is intended to be consistent with the terms and conditions of the Water Supply Agreement that applies to all OWL shareholders.

## DEFINITIONS

<i>Regulations</i>	The Resource Management (Measurement and Reporting of Water Takes) Regulations 2010.
<i>Sub-schemes</i>	The irrigation distribution sub-schemes within the overall Opuha scheme, namely the Totara Valley, Kakahu, Levels Plain and Sutherland sub-schemes.

## POLICY

### 1.1 Introduction

The 2010 *Regulations* are issued under the Resource Management Act 1991 and apply to all consents allowing freshwater to be taken at a rate of 5 litres per second or more. They have been staged in over six years starting initially with larger takes (20 l/s or more) in Nov 2012 and concluding with takes of 5 l/s or more to be compliant by November 2016.

Shareholders irrigating within the Opuha scheme have access to water either through consents held individually by the shareholder or alternatively via one of the irrigation sub-schemes where the consent is held by OWL and operates at the sub-scheme level. The *Regulations* apply for the main water take for the sub-scheme, but do not require the individual takes within the sub-scheme to be metered.

The *Regulations* require water meter data to be provided on an annual basis in an electronic format to the regional council. The current normal practice is for individual water meter installations to have an electronic recording and transmitting facility (telemetry) that enables water use data to be regularly transmitted to a data hosting entity which collates the data and subsequently provides it to the regional council for consent compliance purposes. In most cases the water use data is also made available to the consent holder via electronic means – either directly from the telemetry system or via the data hosting entity.

Within the Opuha scheme, those water users with their own water take consents have been subject to the *Regulations* and therefore have been required to have compliant metering and, in most cases, have data telemetry included. Within the sub-schemes, some individuals have water metering installed but use the meter information (which may or may not be telemetered) solely for their own purposes as they are not required to report water use to the regional council. A significant number of individual water users within the sub-schemes have not installed water meters as part of their original setup.

The position of the OWL Board is that water use by individual shareholders should be measured and verifiable. There are three basic premises for this position:

- Shareholders have a limited entitlement of water (both volumetric and flow rate) based on the number of water shares they hold. It is therefore fundamentally important that the amount and rate of water used by individuals can be verified so that all shareholders have confidence that water is allocated fairly and equitably amongst individual water users. This is especially significant in periods of limited water availability and restriction regimes.
- Operational water distribution efficiency can be significantly improved through the availability of timely and accurate water use data. Water losses occur within the subschemes from both channel leakage and distribution losses. Accurate measurement of water pumped from the schemes by irrigators enables distribution losses to be reduced and areas of channel leakage can be identified and rectified. Improving distribution efficiency will ultimately increase the amount of stored water retained in the lake and thereby increase overall supply reliability.
- The current direction of regional water management policy is based on implementation of industry standard ‘good management practices’ relating to on-farm land and water use. Under the range of future scenarios envisaged by OWL for the Opuha region, most irrigators will require accurate information of actual water use on their properties to meet conditions specified in either region wide plans, scheme consents or individual property consents.

OWL recognises that there can be a significant cost to install or upgrade to a compliant metering and telemetry installation and is providing financial assistance to enable timely completion of the works required.

The objective of this policy is that there is a consistent standard of water metering by all irrigators using more than 5 l/s and that the information is available to OWL for operational and water accounting purposes.

## 1.2 Policy Requirements

### 1.2.1 General

1. All takes above 5 l/s utilising water supplied by Opuha Water Ltd are required to have water meter and telemetry installations that are compliant with the *Regulations*.

2. The target date for completion of installation or upgrade of installations is **1<sup>st</sup> November 2016**.
3. OWL retains the right to limit or refuse to supply water to irrigators who do not meet the requirements of this policy.

### **1.2.2 Design**

1. Design of metering and telemetry installations shall meet current industry standards.
2. The engagement of approved designers and installers is required to ensure that the works are completed to current industry standards. Irrigation New Zealand has produced Codes of Practice and an accreditation scheme for designers and installers (Blue Tick Accreditation) which has established recognised industry standards.
3. The telemetry design and services utilised by the irrigator shall provide for Opuha Water Ltd to access water meter data via basic internet access with capability for hourly information updates.

### **1.2.3 Operational**

1. Individual irrigators are responsible for the maintenance of the installations including required calibration checks.

### **1.2.4 Commercial**

1. The irrigator is responsible for the cost of the water meter and telemetry installation and for the on-going operational and maintenance costs. Ownership of the equipment remains with the irrigator.

### **1.2.5 Approvals**

1. Financial assistance by way of a term loan will be provided for water meter and telemetry installations approved by OWL. An application is to be submitted that provides sufficient information on the design and installation proposal such that OWL can establish that the proposal meets current industry standards. The application should include:
  - a. Design drawings of the installation
  - b. Specification of the equipment proposed
  - c. Names and credentials of proposed suppliers and installers including information/data hosts.
  - d. Quotations for supply and installation of the equipment such that a firm total cost is identified.
2. If financial assistance is provided, the interest rate on the loan will be 2% above OWL's cost of funds as at the time the application is approved and the loan is to be repaid in equal (principal + interest) instalments over 60 months.

### **1.2.6 Review of Policy**

This policy will be reviewed at least three yearly.